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SLOW BOAT TO VANGA

VIRGINIA PEARSON

ALTHOUGH we had been told to board the *Gaston Perier* at 8 : 00 a.m., the boat did not leave the Leopoldville docks until noon January 11th. By that time the sun was scorching and glaring, Stanley Pool was steaming, and so were we. We had boarded the *Perier* with some misgivings, having been liberally supplied by our mission treasurer with paregoric and sulfaguanadine (for diarrhea) and aspirin. After putting our baggage on board we made a hurried trip to the native market (which reminded us a lot of a farmers' market at home) to buy some bananas, and to one of the Belgian grocery stores to purchase some apples and candy. Our friends, of the Congo Inland Mission, Bob and Mabel Bontrager, had supplied us with a big powdered milk tin full of delicious cookies and three gallons of boiled water in quart jars. It was the only water we had to drink during the whole eight-day trip. We did have coffee at breakfast, but the other meals we had to depend on Coca Cola for moisture while our co-passengers drank beer or plain fizz water. Fizz water is quite popular among the Belgians — it's usually the only drinking water you can buy in restaurants or on trains. However, you can sometimes buy *l'eau naturelle* (pure drinking water) put up in bottles and labeled by the distributor. Midway on our trip the captain took on a new supply of Coca Cola at Banningville. He said he had not counted on the appetites of Americans.

Our ship mates were a young Flemish doctor and his wife, who were on their first term of service for the government. Their destination was Bagata, at the conjunction of the Inzia and Kwilu rivers. The other passenger was a tall, broad, good-looking African *frère*, who had been teaching religion, mathematics, and truck mechanics in a Catholic school in the Kivu and was going home to Mushie for a three-day visit with his family after an absence of seven years.

Since there were only three tiny cabins on the boat, each having two narrow, bumpy, lumpy, sagging bunks, Marilee, Johnny, and I shared one cabin, while Bob and the Catholic *frère* shared another.

The large wash bowls in our cabins were sparkling clean, but we were to be disappointed many times later by their not yielding water. The explanation was always that the pipes were plugged, with sand. We sometimes felt that the Congolese passengers who were traveling on the deck below us kept cleaner than we did. A constant form of entertainment was watching them bathe, and it seemed as if there was always at least one of them in the process. They would strip down as far as they could, soap themselves all over, then pour buckets of water over themselves. We saw one big soapy-looking fellow sitting in a washtub near the edge of one of the two barges we were pushing. From time to time he'd pull a bucket of water up out of the river and douse himself. When our boat followed the shore closely and we would pass a village, we would often see mothers bring their children down to the river, hold them by one hand, and duck them clear under. We observed that this method does away with the ring around the bathtub.

On our first day we heard a little commotion on the lower deck. The natives had seen a small crocodile in the river. We saw only its head as it disappeared under the water. Except for a few cranes and small birds we saw no other wildlife during the eight days. Some folks told us that if the water had not been so high we probably would have seen some hippos. Sometimes you could see in behind the thick green foliage of vines and trees which guarded both shores of the river, beautiful lush green meadows.

The *Gaston Perier* has a diesel motor, so we were spared the noise of wood being loaded onto the boat every night, as has to be done for many of the other river boats. Our average rate of speed up river was seven kilometers an hour. During the course of the trip we traveled on four big rivers -- the Congo, Kasai, Kwango, and the Kwilu.

The Congolese passengers, about fifty of them, men, women and children — shared one big black canvas tent on the deck below us behind the superstructure of the boat. The tent had no windows, but was wide open at both ends. Since the one end opened onto the engine room, I'm sure they got no cool breeze from that direction. The metal deck floor added to the heat. They carried their belongings with them -- chairs; mats; huge, f

homemade mattresses in bright-colored ticking. Our fare was ten imes as much as theirs. Our meals were extra. They carried their ood with them as well as cooking pots and dishes. They did their ooking over small wood fires on the steel decks of the two barges. Almost every day paddlers in low, heavy, dugout canoes would hase the *Perier*, catch it, attach their canoe to the riverboat and onduct an open-air market standing up in their canoes. Their roducts were dried fish, live chickens, manioc bread wrapped n green palm leaves, pineapples and bananas. Every evening hen we would tie up for night at a village, women and children ould come down to the boat to market their produce. Long talks of sugar cane were sold one night, and we saw the Congolese ite off raw mouthfuls and chew in great enjoyment. One pas-enger tried to barter with phonograph records, but the women eren't interested.

We were excited most of the day, January 18, in anticipation f our arrival about 4 o'clock in the afternoon at Vanga. We first w it about four miles away as we crept around a bend in the ver. It was so pretty! The sun picked out the aluminum roofs f the missionaries' houses, which are at the top of the green, assy hill that extends down to the river. The *Perier's* whistle asted as we came around the bend to let the folks know a river-oat was on the way. As we slowly drew nearer we could see peo-le coming down the hill. Some of them were carrying manioc sell. But most of them were coming to greet the new mission-ies or just to see what the boat was bringing and who else was it. The coming of riverboats is one of the few sources of ex-ement at Vanga. When we were almost there, the people began sing a hymn of welcome and we could read the banner some of e men were carrying, "Welcome Pearsons!" We were thrilled be at last at Vanga, the spot Bob had been working toward ever ce he had met Dr. A. C. Osterholm twenty years ago. We mbed the steep path to the Walker's home, returning the curi-s stares of the Congolese with smiles and greetings of *Moyo* fe!). We thanked God for a safe, pleasant, and healthy trip and the privilege of adding our talents to those of the other mission-es here and to those of the native Christian leaders, that God's l and way may be known and loved in this part of the world.

ITINERATING — FOR A YEAR!

LEE and JERRY WEAVER

WE feel a little as if we have been in a continual state o itineration for the past year! And what a wonderful thin it is finally to arrive in the land of our calling. Just a year ago w began *our* itineration by leaving Berkeley, California at the clos of the school year, and heading east for Denver, Colorado, an the American Baptist Convention, at which we, with forty-si other new appointees, were presented to the convention. What thrill that was, to be included in the group that represented ou American Baptist missionary outreach to the four corners of th world!

Leaving Denver, we climbed (by means of Chester Scott Ford) high up into the Rockies to Estes Park, where we spen several days of fellowship and indoctrination with the other ne missionaries and the Foreign Mission Society secretaries. As w left that "mountain-top", it was with a feeling of the closeness w truly have in Christ Jesus; for we realized that within a fe months those new friends would be scattered throughout th world, learning and using new languages, working with peop whose customs and lives are so different, yet to every land w carry the same message, that Christ loved us and gave Himself fo us. It is truly a privilege to be a part of the most important bus ness on earth.

After a brief visit to Jerry's home in North Carolina, our iti eration took us to South Orange, N. J., where we spent thr months in the home of "Bill" Parkinson, and Jerry had a perio of training in the treasurer's office in New York. During th time, we also took a week's trip through New England and sa many of the spots that played such an important part in the ear history of America. We were especially glad for this opportunit since our 6-year old son, Rusty, is beginning to be interested such things, and we wanted him to know something of his ow country before he left it for another.

We were given about a month's notice (we were to ha studied at Yale for one semester last fall), before we beg

the next lap of our itineration on September 22nd, when we boarded the S.S. "Maasdam" at Hoboken, New Jersey, heading for Rotterdam, Holland. Arriving at Rotterdam on October 1st, we drove the 100 or so kilometers to Brussels, Belgium, which was to be our home for the next six months! We were thrilled with the picturesqueness of Europe, the different types of architecture, the lovely little gardens, as well as the ideas and customs we encountered which were strange to us. After searching for almost two weeks, we finally found a suitable apartment, and settled down for some serious French study. We realized more and more each day how very essential it was for us to learn the language, both for everyday living, and in order to be able to do our mission work well. By trying to keep ever before us the ultimate goal, we were able to make quite a lot of progress in a very short time, and by the end of March could understand and speak a little, although we realize very well how inadequate we still are.

We had another week of "itineration" during the Christmas holiday, when all ten of the ABFMS missionaries who were in Brussels took a quick trip through Luxembourg, France, Switzerland, and Germany. With Murray and Marjorie Sharpe and Steven, Margot Hakes, and Esther Greenmun, we rented a small, German-made Volkswagon station wagon, and had a wonderful, cold, interesting week of seeing something of Europe. It was a wonderful experience to see places and things with a history so old, especially to us who feel that anything that happened more than a hundred years ago is practically ancient! Chateaux and cathedrals dating back to the 10th and 11th centuries really made history come alive, and even brought reality to fairy-tale princesses in ivory towers.

As the end of March approached, so did the last lap of our year's itineration, for we were scheduled to fly to Leopoldville on April 1st. Another hectic week or two of packing and listing things, and we were off aboard a Sabena DC-6 at about 5:30 p. m. on April 1st. We stopped briefly at Lisbon, Portugal, and Kano, Nigeria, for refueling, and at last arrived in Leo at 1:15 p. m. on April 2nd. What a thrill and what a relief to *be here!* The welcome we received from the Leo staff and *Tata* Lubikulu, the native pastor, left nothing to be desired. We really felt "wanted!"

And we are still thrilled with the beauty of the station site, the warmth and friendliness of the people, the fellowship of the missionaries. We are very glad to have the itineration finished, at least for a time; although we are already eager to see our other stations. We did make an Easter weekend trip the 90 km. by train to Sona Bata, and enjoyed very much seeing the hospital, church and school there. Easter Sunday was a high spot as we witnessed the baptism of more than 60 new Christians. We feel that we have been very well rewarded with our year of unsettled living, because everywhere we have gone we have had rich and inspiring experiences. And everywhere we have found the love of Christ flowing through Christian people, whether white or black European or American. After having covered large parts of half the world, we are well content to settle down in this great land of opportunity to work for our Master, but are also willing to say too, "since Jesus goes with me, I'll go — anywhere!"

THE PREPARATION, THE PERSPIRATION AND THE INSPIRATION OF ITINERATION

T. E. Bubeck

IN bush travel as in much else in the Christian ministry, adequate preparation can greatly reduce annoying perspiration. Let those who wish "rough it". Let the wise missionary plan it.

The writer has five cases which have been with him (with one exception) since 1935. There is the bed trunk — a good sturdy campcot — a bookcase containing typewriter, reading matter, folders and papers, wash-stand, and two chop-boxes. The wash-stand, an old packing case, is cut in two lengthwise, the top half hinged and contains toilet articles, washbasin, etc. The lower half has been made into a drawer and contains all in the line of clothing (and much else) needed for a trip of several months.

The bookcase is an old match case on end with a hinged door in front. The lower sections contains typewriter, the middle section

books and the top, papers and folders. Bible, dictionary, a bit of light and heavy reading matter fill the book section. A variety of magazines and all necessary folders for a visit to church centers make up the top part.

One of the two chop-boxes is another small packing case nicely hinged and shelved so that two rows of large cans fill one side and three rows of smaller cans the others. The other chop-box s another match case sawed lengthwise four inches from the op. The top section carries dishes, tablecloth, napkins and silver, while the lower contains all pots and pans, bread, potatoes, onions, etc. for the trip.

There is never "Where is this?" or "Where is that?" when this' and 'that' has its place and — I should add — is kept there. There is ample occasion for embarrassment, frustration and perspiration without providing for it through poor preparation. One should not fail, to pay tribute to the missionary's wife who plays so large a part in the preparation for a trek.

To the modern missionary the perspiration and heartache is due not so much to climbing hills which is, of course, not excluded but in trying to spread himself too thin. One cannot meet with several thousand followers, several thousand school children, several hundred teachers and evangelists, conduct meetings every morning and evening, carry on correspondence, stake out and lay foundations for new buildings, repair old ones, check on church records and finances and multiple other tasks which often tire one and keep one from more important tasks, without breaking out in perspiration, not so much from over exercise as from being overwhelmed. At that stage impatience is the besetting sin. One often recalls the statement that it is not what one does so much as what one is forced to leave undone which tires and wears one out the most.

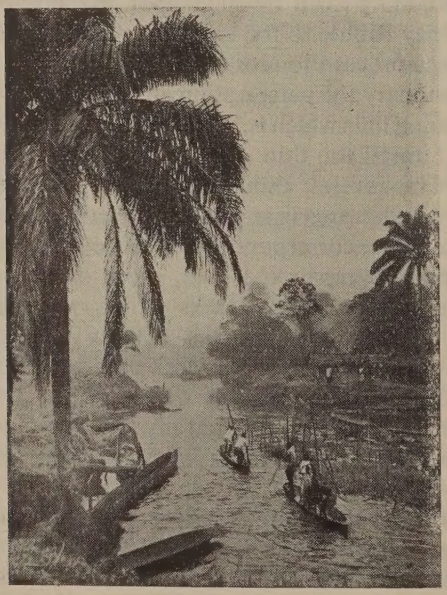
It is about the INSPIRATION that we write the most. There are the crowds of savage saints whose enthusiasm knows neither urb nor culture. There are the baptisms and the services of Communion when dark earthen vessels worship with us, vessels of a ighter hue, and together forget about the tint for the treasure, urchased for us at infinite cost to One in Whom we are one.

One doesn't meet with great crowds and with thousands

of individuals without having experiences which make profoun impressions. To my dying day I believe I shall see a deaf an dumb lad of about twelve witness with gestures to his deep fait in One Who loved him, died for him and rose again and is now a the right hand of the Father interceeding for him.

We had the joy of meeting a chap with whom we pleaded fo over four hours not to leave his wife for another. He was a stubborn as his wife, but they finally gave in, and took hand while we prayed with them. That was four or five years ago. To day with joy written all over their faces they greeted us, leaders i the church life at one of our church centers and the proud paren of three lovely youngsters.

There is the inspiration of seeing the work grow and bearin not always the kind of fruit we should like, sometimes leav



which are also ne essary, but there life and there is fai and there is hope th with the years w come "much frui to the glory of t Father. We wou carry on even if the were no fruit, no i spiration, but we a genuinely gratef for the thrilling e periences, pleasa evidences that assu us that God's Spi is at work blessi His work with l and growth.

"THAT EYES MAY SEE AND EARS MAY HEAR"

R. G. METZGER

PEOPLE in much of the Sona Bata field have become familiar with movies. The government administrators and men from the information service often show movies in the large centers. These are movies especially prepared for showing to African audiences. They include pictures of current events, especially in Congo, Congo life and scenes, and educational films on hygiene, good manners, and other subjects of value. But for a long time we felt the need for religious pictures, and particularly something which could be used out in the most isolated villages. While home on furlough last year a friend asked if we were familiar with or used the "S.V.E. International." We didn't even know about it. This conversation led to a Sunday School class in that church, the Oak Park Avenue Baptist Church of Berwyn, Illinois, giving us one of these projectors. Other departments of the same church, and other friends, gave film strips covering various Bible subjects.

This projector uses an ordinary Coleman kerosene pressure lantern for light, and with a fine lens gives excellent results, even for quite a large audience. Since coming back to the field we have been trying out the projector at home before small groups, such as our station Sunday School teachers. It was necessary also to translate the descriptive material which went with each film strip. This latter task is not yet complete.

Then on the first trip out into the district for one of our Sona Bata *matondo*, or thanksgiving services, I took the projector along. How would these sophisticated Africans, used to sound movies, react to silent film strips with Bible pictures? How would adults and children, accustomed to being entertained, take to serious religious material? Well, now I know. It was wonderful.

On Friday evening the sheet was hung, the lantern of the projector lit, and folks seated on the ground so everyone could see. Nearly 100 gathered for this first showing. I explained that the purpose of the pictures was not primirily to entertain, and that

everyone should be quiet as for a church service. Then we began with the pictures of the Life of Christ. With the first two or three pictures there were whispered comments. But except for audience answers to questions I put from time to time, there was absolute and intent silence. In fact, it was one of the most worshipful services I have ever attended in the villages. When the picture showing Jesus teaching His disciples to pray appeared, we all prayed together the Lord's Prayer. Forty-one pictures and nearly an hour after the start, there was a sigh and murmur, and then silence again while the local pastor closed the service with prayer. Folks dispersed quietly, talking softly as they left. A few stayed to ask some questions. At least this first attempt was a complete success.

Saturday evening a heavy rain began at 6:30 and it seemed as though there could be no service. But by 8:30 the rain had stopped and we were able to begin, even though folks could not sit on the wet ground but had to stand. From 7:45 to 8:15 while the rain was slacking off, at least 20 different people came to ask if we were going to have the pictures. So we began Part II of the Life of Christ. Again a large crowd, over 125, gathered, and for fifty minutes stood quietly in the damp, cool air. The pictures of the pharisee and publican praying in the temple, the crucifixion and of the empty tomb, brought out whispered comments. As before, we closed with prayer, and folks quietly returned to their houses for the night. After I had packed up the projector and was ready to go to the pastor's house, where I was staying, a woman came to talk about returning to church fellowship. When I reached the house two young men were waiting to ask what they needed to do to be baptized. They came from another area, but are working for the hydro-electric company near the church center. It is safe to say that all three, the woman and the two young men, were touched by what they heard, and *saw*.

ON THE BANGU

N. G. RIDDLE

ONE of the most colorful words in the missionary vocabulary, and one which seems to the new arrival to connote the essence of Africa and missions, is 'itinerary'. My chance to find out about it first hand came when I accompanied evangelist Martin Engwall on a two-week trip to the famed Bangu region, a gigantic, mountainous plateau roughly the shape of a triangle with the point overhanging our station at Kimpese and the base a couple of hundred miles to the north on the Congo River.

A Village on the Bangu

There were many new sights and sounds to absorb on the trip, one of the most outstanding being the curiosity of the people — especially the children. Even in this advanced age the white man is evidently still somewhat of a rarity, for our slightest move was watched as though we were from another planet.

Then there were the roads. We pioneered on a newly-opened one and got some real thrills. Often it was difficult to tell whether we were on or off it. The bridges were of such uncertain quality on the trip going that it became almost standard procedure for Martin and all the passengers to cross them on foot, leaving me to

inch the truck across while they gestured or arranged planks. The bridges all held, but we must have weakened one, for it gave way under the next truck, fortunately, however, without causing injury or serious damage.

Another interesting feature was the palavers. These took place in every village as each had its problems to present. One of the most exhausting had to do with the transfer of a teacher. To come to an agreement satisfactory to all parties took us seven separate meetings, none of which was under an hour in length. I certainly heard some dramatic Kikongo in those sessions.

I was very interested in comparing the work of the church and the school on the station with their counterparts in the villages. On the whole I was pleasantly surprised by what was being done, especially in view of the great handicaps. The status of the local assemblies of the church varied a great deal. At Paza where we stopped the first night the church leadership and the village leadership were almost identical, and church and secular matters were handled almost interchangeably. In the pastor's village of Kimoko the chief is very active also. It gave me real satisfaction to see how much a part of the people's daily life the church had become. There is, of course, plenty of room for improvement, but the fact that the gospel and the church are not regarded as foreign is significant. One man at Paza said to us with a gleam in his eye, "Tell Mama Engwall and Mama Riddle that the church here is strong and alive!" In other villages like Dunga we found church members existing as a minority among Catholics and non-believers. The work was harder here and hampered from time to time. Their faith, however, is all the more real as they seek to maintain a clear-cut testimony before their non-Christian neighbors. Our hearts were warmed by the earnest hunger for the gospel evidenced in every village by decisions to confess sin and regain fellowship with the church or to accept Christ as Savior.

The work of the school is progressing in spite of the lack of buildings and class materials. Some villages take the initiative and build their own temporary buildings. Others near Catholic stations where self help is not encouraged are inclined to wait on us to do more. In order that the church and school do not drift apart in their goals, the former works with the teachers by means

of a committee. The pressure for new schools is tremendous and it is hard to refuse so often. We cannot, however, over-extend ourselves to the detriment of the other phases of our work. On the credit side is the heartening way in which the schools are feeding the churches with members. Results depend to a large extent on the spiritual vigor of the teachers, but actual results as well as possibilities are encouraging.

One question being widely asked by Christians in countries sending missionaries to Africa is the probable fate of the church if a catastrophe like that which came to China should happen here. My time was all too short, and the area covered was only a fraction of the Congo, but I did get some definite impressions. Persecution of the Christians and anti-white sentiment are not new here as prophet movements arise from time to time with these two features in prominence. As always in the history of the church the chaff is separated from the wheat leaving the latter purified and strengthened. So it would be, I believe, in any future persecution. We do need desperately to train more capable leadership in any event. If a challenge was needed this trip certainly provided it. It was a moving experience to sit where the African sits and feel to some extent the sharpness of his problems. I look forward to future adventures in the 'bush'.

THE EVANGELIST'S WIFE GOES ITINERATING

MARGARET JUMP

IT is usually a Monday morning that we start out, the truck loaded with food boxes, camp cots, cooking utensils and books. And most of the time we arrive at the church center where we plan to work, by noon. So there is time to get things unpacked, set up the cots, have lunch, and even rest a little before two o'clock, when the work begins.

There is plenty to keep us busy at any one of the twenty-nine church centers in the Vanga field. The number of inquirers asking for baptism continues to be large, and the major portion of Chet's time is spent in interviewing them to decide if they are ready to take this step. Chet, the pastor of the church, a visiting pastor, and perhaps one or two of the deacons call the candidates one by one and question them.

A day at a church post begins with a six o'clock chapel service led by the pastor or the missionary. A quick breakfast, and then it is time to begin the examination of the inquirers. The interviews continue all morning with just a short break about ten o'clock when the pastor's wife sends word that his mid-morning meal is ready. Noon provides another break, but at two o'clock the examinations continue until dark. Evenings may be spent talking with the leaders or the teachers about church affairs, or relaxing with books, games, or a portable radio.

Chet plans to spend some time with the teachers too, to check on the school gardens, the school buildings and dormitories, and the physical equipment of the school. If the examinations are finished before Saturday, he spends the time visiting the villages of the region. The baptismal service, frequently followed by a Communion service is held on Sunday morning, and the afternoon finds us on our way to another post or back to Vanga.

My day is a bit more varied. Morning I spend in school inspecting classrooms, examining the children, listening to the teachers, jotting down ideas for new lessons and textbooks. And then in the afternoon when the school children are working in their gardens, I meet with the women. A religious meeting at two o'clock where we study the Catechism, and the requirement

for the Certificate of Christian Growth, is followed by a lesson in simple hygiene. The first day we speak about foods and how to keep them clean. The second day we show the women how to prepare for a confinement case in the village if it is impossible to go to a hospital. Other lessons include bathing the baby, preparation of a baby's food, and care of a child who is sick. These lessons are followed by classes for illiterate women. The hour from four to five is again given to the teachers. At that time I give them suggestions for improving their teaching and preparing their lessons, as well as courses in Religion, French, and Arithmetic. A Christian family service on Friday night is an important part of the week's program.

Karen always looks forward to a visit to a church post. It is fun to get up early, eat breakfast, and then rush out to investigate how many sheep, goats, dogs, and cats are in the village. She looks forward to having the pastor go for his mid-morning meal because that means a few minutes for cookies with daddy and mother. Noon and nap time come all too soon. But the afternoon is fun too — playing in the sand, walking around the village, and then at five o'clock a walk with mother, greeting the women who are bending over their fires preparing the evening meal, talking with some roly-poly baby, walking along the automobile road or down towards the spring. Supper and the hour afterwards are a special time, with a bath in the biggest dishpan, bedtime stories, making shadow pictures on the wall, and then tumbling into a camp cot with the mosquito net tucked in tight.

It sounds like fun doesn't it ? It sounds inspiring and challenging too.

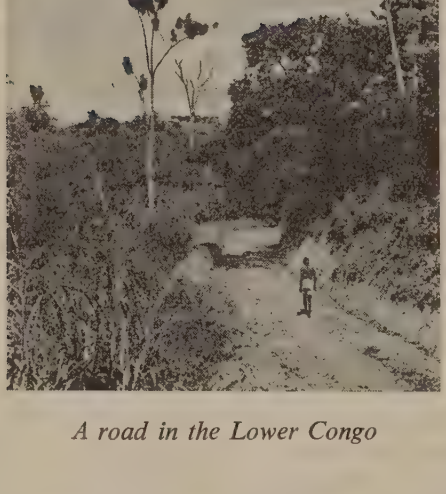
There is just one thing wrong — IT DOESN'T HAPPEN THIS WAY! For when Chet starts out on Monday morning there is just one camp cot in the truck, and the battered tin trunk contains only his clothes. There just aren't enough missionaries at Vanga, and so Karen and I wave goodbye to Daddy, and stay home to work in the station school.

And so most of the itinerating done by this evangelistic wife is in wishful thinking about what she'd like to do. But perhaps someday there will be an educational couple at Vanga, and then the wish will become a reality.

FETISH BURNING IN THE KIKONGO AREA

DONALD C. NILES

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear has torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.
I John 4 : 18.



A road in the Lower Congo

THIS verse came to my mind again and again during the last few months as I was traveling from village to village preaching the Gospel.

About a year ago we received word at the Kikongo station that some of the nearby villages would like a missionary to come and help them burn their fetishes. When we first heard this, we were thrilled and praised God that at last our people were seeking to leave the old ways of fetishism. However, when we went to burn the fetishes, we found that there was not a sense of release and peace with God but rather there was fear. Fear that some of the others had not thrown away their fetishes and that next time that anyone would become sick, the whole village would blame the sickness on one who had not thrown away his fetishes. We preached the Gospel that night and tried to let them know

that to leave fetishism is not enough. They would soon return to it if they did not accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. Only He could keep them in perfect peace and fellowship with God. We left that village that night feeling discouraged. We had gone expecting to find that through the work of the village teacher they had repented and accepted Christ, but instead it seemed that they only wanted to get rid of their fetishes. One thing they knew: fetishes did not satisfy their desire for peace and happiness.

Since that night we have burned fetishes in a host of villages. For the first few months there seemed to be only one desire on the part of the people, to leave the way of fetishes without replacing it with anything new. We began to wonder if there could possibly be a renewed interest in an old Prophet Movement which devastated our churches a few years ago. With misgivings and much prayer we continued to burn the fetishes in village after village. We justified it by the attitude that the people were sick of fetishes and might be moved by the Holy Spirit to seek the Christian Way.

Since the beginning of 1954, we have seen a new phase of the fetish burning. We have been receiving many chief's bracelets. This is significant because all the people believe that somehow their lives are related to that bracelet as well as its being the sign of his chieftainship. We were encouraged that the people seemed to want to go all the way and get rid of everything. Some of the villages where we had previously been, recalled us to accept their chief's bracelet along with other fetishes that he had inherited.

Nearly all fetishes have to have money put in them to make them effective. Usually when the people throw away their fetishes they do not even want to have the money left in the village. Again this is in fear that the money will bring the fetishes back to the village. However I rejoiced one day when we opened the fetishes of an old woman who had never made any profession of her faith in Christ, and found that there was no money in them. When I asked where the money went, she laughed and said, "I wasn't going to let that money be thrown away, I bought a pineapple with it." This was the first sign of freedom from the fear of fetishes. Since then we have had many come and without fear throw their fetishes on the fire. Chiefs have come and said, "Here is my bracelet, it no longer has any value for me and my people."

An outstanding exception to this was at the village of Mbulukumbi where the chief came with a bracelet that he had taken off under pressure from some other villagers a few days before my visit. He had taken the bracelet off but in his heart he had not given it up. He asked me to replace the bracelet with prayer so that it would be empowered to keep him and his people from harm! Of course I could not do this. I told him that I would pray for him and his people that they might be kept by the power of God. He said, "Oh, I believe all that, but please have mercy on your child and his people, and put the pracelet back on my wrist. My life and the life of this people depend upon it. This bracelet is my life." I tried to tell him through an interpreter that truly his life was in God and not in the bracelet made by men's hands. We held a prayer service for him and his village and then he allowed me to take his picture holding the bracelet that he so wanted to have back on his wrist. I shall never forget the old chief's faith in that bracelet.

Recently, Lisia Philippe, a deacon of our Mbonga Church said to me, "Tata, you are going to run out of follower's cards. I have burned fetishes in several villages, and now the people are coming to me asking me for cards. They say they have given up their fetishes and now they want to become Christians and join the Church." What a joy such a statement brings to our hearts. At last we are seeing our prayers answered in the moving of the Holy Spirit among our people. This man's words, plus the fact that several men have told me that they are going to get rid of their second and third wives in order to return to the fellowship of the church, have given me faith to believe that we are not on the wave of another Prophet Movement but on the first steps toward the revival of many backslidden Christians, and the awakening of many who have been dead in trespasses and sins. Will you join us in prayer that the movement will continue to the glory of God and the salvation of many souls for His kingdom?

WHY NOT?

EMILY KEYES

TAKING advantage of a month's delay in opening school dates, I accepted an invitation from Kikongo colleagues to spend my two-week vacation with them. It was a time of refreshment.

One spiritual peak was reached during my first weekend, when Viola Smith and I packed food, flannelgraph, cots and materials for a three-day meeting in the district. It was to be a Leaders' training period, preparing pastors wives and outstanding women who could read to teach the women in their villages, showing them the part Christ is asking to play, the burdens He is asking to lift in their homes. We expected perhaps a handful of women.

Fortunately, one's expectations are often replaced by more interesting and more challenging realities. Yes, there *were* the small number of pastors' wives who could read — but they were not alone. The village church was overflowing with women: young, middle-aged and old who had come to hear what the missionaries had to tell them. Far over and above the majority of women could *not* read, and would lack the poise or the courage to lead other groups of women in similar meetings. Many were not Christian, and we were thankful for the opportunity to speak to them. So often our missionary days are so full with the training of leaders that we get no occasion to speak directly to the village folk who do not know Christ. Without expecting it, we had the chance to know these women who would be reached by the pastors' wives, under ordinary circumstances. We were thankful for the influence their leaders had already shown, in telling them about the meeting (even though they hadn't been expressly planned for). We were thankful too that we had a message for them.

As the day passed we came to know each other better, as we talked together about the meaning of Christ in our homes, in every part of our living. It seemed that this experience was one I was seeking when I realized that I could not be content to stay in America when so many in Congo did not know Christ. As we walked through the village following the afternoon service, I

thought of a conversation with a doctor who thought it foolish to leave America for Africa. "Why spend your time upsetting the lives of those simple folk? They're happy with their fetishes. Leave them alone, they're happy as they are!"

Why not leave them alone? Why interfere? Why not let them be happy continuing their simple ways? Why not?

The presence of the non-Christian women proved to me, as I had been convinced before, the irony of the "why-not's." They began to share their fears with us, asking about the power of the fetishes they have been told could kill, cure, bless or curse. Yes, WHY NOT let them be happy in the belief that an angry husband could pick up grains of sand from his wife's footprint in the dust and make a fetish powerful enough to kill her? Let that woman be happy in the fear of a few grains of sand !

Don't let the Message of Christ interfere with the custom of husbands, bored with a faithful wife — to leave her to support the children (until they are of an age to be of use to him) while he flits from one wife to another. Why not leave such peaceful and happy homes as they are?

Let mothers continue to be happy in tying a dirty feather (paid for at a price!) on the ankle of a diseased foot — and let them be happy when the fetish does not prove true and the infection spreads! They must be truly satisfied with their medicines of dust, ashes and incantations — much more so than they could be with the cleanliness, skill and the Message of Christ they receive from the mission hospital. (But those who visit the hospital return — and bring others.)

But IF they are so happy, so content, why are not their faces glad too? Why do they seek escape from their fears? Why is there peace and power in the lives of those who have come to know and follow Christ? Why do they plead for more missionaries to tell them and their neighbors more about Christ and His Way?

Why not leave them alone? Why not let them continue as they were? Why interfere in their way of worshipping? Why not stay in the circles of friends, freezers and TV sets? And, as too many church members ask, "Why not let SOMEONE ELSE go instead?" Each day in Congo, more reasons accumulate to answer "Why not?" If someone wonders, come and see.

I ALWAYS MISS TRAINS

VIRGINIA NICKERSON

KNOW anybody with a green thumb? Someone who's a born cook? A person for whom everything he touches turns to gold? to quote a few clichés? I do, too — but they're never me. It's like they say: Some people are talented, and some people are not, and you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

In as simple a matter as kneading bread dough, (they tell me it's simple, and it looks easy in the book) I follow all the directions — but instead of light crusty loaves, all I get are muscles. And gardening — my talent lies in uprooting the tomato plants so I can give my undivided attention to the weeds. Even linguistically (though I like to think I have "innate language ability") I can put my foot in my mouth almost as many times as I open it. The nurses at the hospital are getting quite adept at preparing the chief (bed) for the patient, and though my first gift from a Congolese friend was a chicken, I said thank you for nails.

I am not, however, completely ungifted -- it's just that *my* outstanding ability is that I can make even simple things much more complicated than they need be, sometimes with spectacular results. This talent is one that can be used in any field — my medical work, language study, housekeeping — and it's especially useful when I go travelling. Though it did not spring into being fully developed at the moment I was commissioned for Congo, being a missionary has certainly widened the scope of my operations. It has meant that I could take trams and buses in the wrong direction in Brussels as well as San Francisco, get seasick on the English channel as well as on Santa Cruz Bay, and have flat tires on deeply rutted Congo roads instead of U.S. 40. But it's more than geography, and though I have an added advantage in my susceptibility to motion sickness, the largest part, I feel, is innate ability, and should be recognized as such.

Take my trip from New York to Congo, for example. (Incidentally, it was on top of a boat load of dynamite.) Because it was my first into this half of the world, I had to be initiated when we crossed the equator. That I expected — it happens to every-

one — but I got an extra dose the same day when I did my first "human hemstitching" on a fellow passenger, age 6, who had fallen and split his knee wide open. For surgery: a table in the dining salon; equipment: one rather dull skin needle, the only one in the ship's emergency kit, and one thumb forcep; suture: J & P Coates no. 40; anaesthetic: nothing. That, it seemed to me at the time, was a complication with a vengeance.

Even getting from Matadi, where the boat docked, to Banza Manteke, a distance of only 65 miles, was quite an event. I was supposed to take the train to the nearest railroad station, but as I've already said, "I always miss trains." It wasn't that I didn't try — I all but ran from the boat to the station, trailing after the "boys" who had my luggage perched atop their heads (one head each) when the promised taxi didn't arrive, but I still reached the station just in time to hear the train give a toot and start away, probably the only time in months that it had left on schedule.

That, in turn, necessitated a trip to the telephone office to notify the station master at Lufu what had happened so he could explain to my missionary colleagues when they came to meet me. Surely nothing could be easier than a telephone call — but I managed to leave the place looking like a tornado had just passed through when the termite-ridden door leading into the main office fell off its hinges at my touch and with much splintering of wood and shattering of glass broke into kindling-size pieces across one of the desks. My only explanation: I didn't know my own strength. Fortunately no one was killed or even injured.

I *did* eventually get to Banza Manteke that day, though not by train. Two other missionaries who were driving to Leopoldville gave me and my luggage a "lift" in their already jam-packed station wagon. (I sat in the middle with a full grown mimeograph on my lap.) And after being deposited at Lufu, I waited two and a half hours while the mission mail boy peddled furiously back to the station to announce that the new *mama* had arrived, and would somebody please go and claim her. It was a strange introduction to my new home.

It's always the same. My first trip to visit our dispensary at Lukunga involved a twelve hour hike (six hours in and out of the village) over some rough terrain, one broken toe acquired while

bathing in the spring there, two tsetse fly bites, the scars of which remain until this day, and the most frightening ride of my life in a pouring rain over clay mountain roads as slippery as ice. We skidded — we got stuck — we shoveled tracks for the wheels to follow so we wouldn't fall off the other side of the road, — we lay under the car in the mud and put on mud guards, which promptly became unfastened and fell off so that one of us had to go back and find them, — we ran out of gas when it was raining the hardest, and we were run into by a huge deer that came bounding out of the forest and sideswiped our truck. *We* were Annis Ford and myself, and without doubt we qualified that night for the title of "most bedraggled missionary." And these things happened not just once, but several times each (except of being hit by the deer and running out of gas.) I'm really looking forward to my next trip there during the dry season, when I'll doubtless get caught in a brush fire or fall through the vine bridge across the Lukunga River.

That trip, though, was just a preparatory course for the jaunt Mary Bonar, Madelyn Albrecht and I made to Mukimbungu, another one of Banza Manteke's outposts, where there is also a regional school and a dispensary. We travelled by commercial truck, a mode of transportation which leaves much to be desired, and in that way we were able to stretch what should have been a three hour trip into ten. In fact, it took three hours to go the first ten kilometers because the poor overloaded truck kept breaking down and refusing to go another meter up the hills. Whenever this happened, everyone in the truck would jump out, gather round the hood, and peer knowingly in at the engine while the driver screwed and unscrewed all the movable parts and siphoned gas in and out of the gas tank. After twenty minutes or so of this, the truck would catch its breath and allow itself to be persuaded to advance puffing another two or three hundred meters — and we'd start in all over again.

We did get there — at midnight, the blackest, thickest midnight I have ever seen. As we stumbled stiffly out of the truck to collect our bags and get settled for the night, we found that our food box was missing. This probably would have seemed like a major tragedy except that we were all so tired that our fatigue

softened the blow. Besides, I was brought up in the missionaries-always-look-on-the-bright-side-of-things tradition, so I volunteered, a real Pollyanna, "I'm just glad it wasn't the beds."

Uh-huh, you've guessed. Not only do I miss trains, but I also lose things. The beds had apparently stayed with the food box when we changed cars at Kimpese. They were only canvas camp cots, but in retrospect, they took on all the allure of inner-spring, beauty-rest creations. But Mary explained our predicament, and the head teacher brought us *tuandu*, mats of papyrus stalks, to sleep on. Surprisingly, we did sleep, and soundly, though we woke up feeling rather corregated. Our friends also brought us food and dishes — two chickens, peanuts, pineapples, mangoes, tea, sugar, and tins of milk, so our "tragedy" turned into an object lesson on Christian generosity.

After a second night on our mats, we were up at five to hike to the Congo River to catch a small cargo boat home. It was due at eight thirty — it arrived about three in the afternoon. The hours between we spent very profitably eating bananas and counting the welts left by the scores of ants, mosquitoes, and flies which were eating us. In spite of our bites, we really enjoyed the trip down the river seated majestically on sacks of palm nuts while the pilot skillfully manoeuvred the boat to avoid the many whirlpools and rapids. And finally, after another ride in another commercial truck (this one completely uneventful) we arrived back home.

The moral of all this — there is one, though our days aren't always so catastrophic nor so interesting-to-write-home-about. But they are all alike in this respect — we never know what they will bring. A knock at the door may be a peddler with peanuts to sell — or it may be someone in real distress seeking aid. As Christ's representatives here in Congo, we pray that whatever comes, we will respond as lovingly and as graciously as He would were He here Himself.

EASTER AT BOKO

JEAN LEE LUCKEY

MFUMU FULUKIDI, ALELUYA! The Lord is risen, Hallelujah! This was the joyous response of those gathered at the sunrise service Easter morning at Boko. We sat in our own "bowl' or amphitheatre and at the upper edge, between us and the sunrise which was painting the sky, stood three crosses. How wonderful for us and for these Congolese who have so recently left behind them the darkness of fear and superstition of fetish worship, to place their faith in a Risen Lord! What a glorious opportunity to bring a joyous and triumphant faith to this land!

Following the sunrise service, the school children went out to gather wild flowers, fresh with dew, to place around the edge of the platform we had built outdoors for the Easter play which was to be given later. As soon as breakfast was over, we made our way to a small stream nearby. Five school girls, one school boy and one village woman were baptized. Nearly one hundred school boys and girls are "inquirers" and we hope some of them will be ready for baptism by fall. It was impressive to see those who are already baptized Christians volunteer to be a big brother or sister to the new Christians. A woman or school girl stepped out of the crowd of observers to walk up the hill with the one coming out of the water, a school boy met the boy who had just been baptized. They pledged themselves to meet with the "new" one for prayer and to be helpful to him as he began his Christian life.

Upon our return from the baptismal service we took our places on the log seats which the school boys had built under the trees near the church. Our thatch church seats a little more than 200 and our Easter congregation numbered 600 (the largest gathering this new station has yet received). Following the special Easter offering, the school children presented a play on the meaning of the cross. The reactions voiced by members of the congregation assured us that they recongized and appreciated the intended message. Indeed, one young man who had previously been a teacher but had left his work, came to Mr. Robbins later that afternoon. "I want to accept whatever cross the Lord has for me,"

he said. "I'll accept any school where there's a place for me." He has already taken his place in a small village.

Services came to a close with the Lord's supper served to the Christians in the church. The newly baptized were taken into church fellowship and received their first communion.

Yes, we rejoice that it is our task to preach a faith triumphant to these who live in darkness. Our Lord is risen, and the gospel we preach is one of joy and hope!

NEWS ITEMS

LEOPOLDVILLE — When Mr. and Mrs. Weaver and their three children arrived in Leopoldville, they were heartily received. As new members of our Congo mission and as members of the Leopoldville staff, they are a welcome addition, but we are especially happy because Mr. Weaver came to be the Mission Treasurer. Their coming released the H. D. Browns of one responsibility now they are carrying on in the office of Mission Secretary while Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong are on furlough. The Arley Browns are the missionaries who actually carry on the work among the Congolese in this section of the city, the population being 39,000 there is a great challenge here. On Easter Sunday there were 3 baptized and received into the church.

Mr. Albaugh and Mr. Farnum, secretaries from the New York office and Mrs. Albaugh, arrived in Congo the first of May They are here for a period of about 2 and 1/2 months to visit each station. They spent the first week of June with us at Leopoldville Our annual conference will be held at Vanga from July 6 to 16 This will be an opportunity for our secretaries to share in the discussions of our problems and plans and find out at first hand how great are our NEEDS.

KIMPESE — It was with regret that we sent the Ericksons away the middle of May. At our conference last July they generously offered to stay one more year over their time for retirement, but

early this year Mrs. Erickson was taken critically ill, then recovered sufficiently to resume her teaching at EPI for a few weeks. When she had a second attack the doctors advised her to go home to U.S. as soon as possible for the necessary surgery. There was no choice but to go, even though it left more work for the already heavily burdened staff. We hope and pray for her recovery and restoration to health, but as they are retiring from their work in Congo it is necessary to find a replacement for them at Kimpese.

Early in July, Dean Tuttle, just graduated from the high school at Lubondai, left the Congo for their home in U.S. He will enter college in the fall.

KIKONGO — Some important milestones have been passed here at Kikongo. A pageant portraying 25 years of mission work was given May 8th. It was given in the palm branch shelter which has been serving as our church house. There were many scenes and the entire pageant lasted nearly three hours. The next day, Sunday the 9th, we had our first services in our beautiful, newly completed church building. There was an overflow crowd attending the dedication. Congolese friends came from all over our Kikongo field and others came from as far away as Sona Bata and Leopoldville. Mr. and Mrs. Albaugh and Mr. Farnum were here from New York. These three are visiting our Congo mission as representatives of our Board in the States. Monday the 10th, the first wedding in our new church united Makonko Alphonse and Mbunba Henriette in marriage. Makonko is a first-year student at our Bible Institute. As one of our missionary staff remarked, "When I sit in our church I get a lump in my throat. It is so wonderful." Now we won't have to call off any more services because of rain!

May 26th was a very happy occasion for the staff, but specially for Mr. and Mrs. D. C. Niles, because their second son, Wayne Louis, arrived in this world.

SONA BATA — The school population at Sona Bata is rapidly growing. This year we have 769 children, of whom 484 are boarders and 285 live with their parents on the station. We have already finished three new temporary houses of mud and are now building two more, to be used to house these children. A class in

carpentry has been started toward which the Sona Bata churches gave 34,000 frs. for tools and teacher's salary. There are 15 boys in the class and they have made tool chests, benches, tables, school desks, doors and windows for the new houses.

The six new dormitories of cement blocks, 70% paid by the government and 30% by the mission, are now occupied by 72 girls. These are equipped with iron beds, cupboards, a table and benches. The Women's Center and a new residence for the WABFMS missionaries, are being built.

In spite of the fact that the medical school is moved from Sona Bata to Kimpese, the hospital work is continuing to grow. The number of obstetrical cases is increasing as well as other patients. A new dispensary has been opened in the district, and another one which had to be closed for lack of a nurse, is again dispensing medicines. At both these places there was great rejoicing at the dedication services. In January, 8 boys and 8 girls were accepted for the new course for *aides infirmiers*. The girls study obstetrics, in addition to the other courses.

Mr. Metzger is busy attending meetings of the Sona Bata district churches. At Yongo there were 700 attending and the offering was 4,115 frs. Easter day was a day of rejoicing on the station. We had special songs from the school children and 6 were batized, mostly from among the school children.

DIRECTORY SUPPLEMENT

IN BELGIUM — new appointees, studying French for one year:
Miss Esther Greenmun, R.N.
Miss Margot Hakes
Mr. and Mrs. Murray F. Sharp

IN U. S. — completing preparations for service in Congo:
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barnett
Mr. and Mrs. James B. Clark
Dr. and Mrs. Donald L. Martin
Miss Rhoda Nielson, R.N.
Miss Elizabeth Spinney, R.N.
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Stabell
Mr. and Mrs. Charles H. Stuart

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† All air-mail addressed via Léopoldville instead of Matadi
‡ For air-mail add — and Léopoldville.

See page 31 for Directory Supplement.